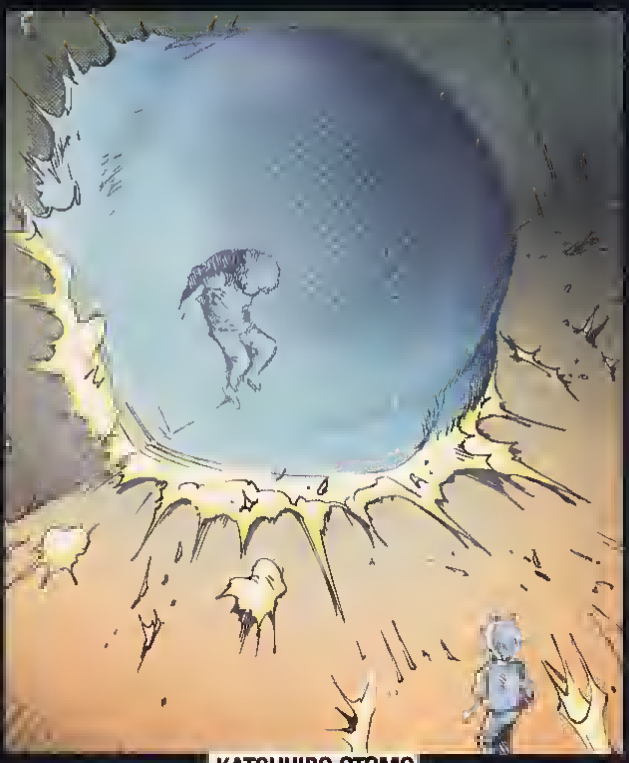
AKIRA 15™



KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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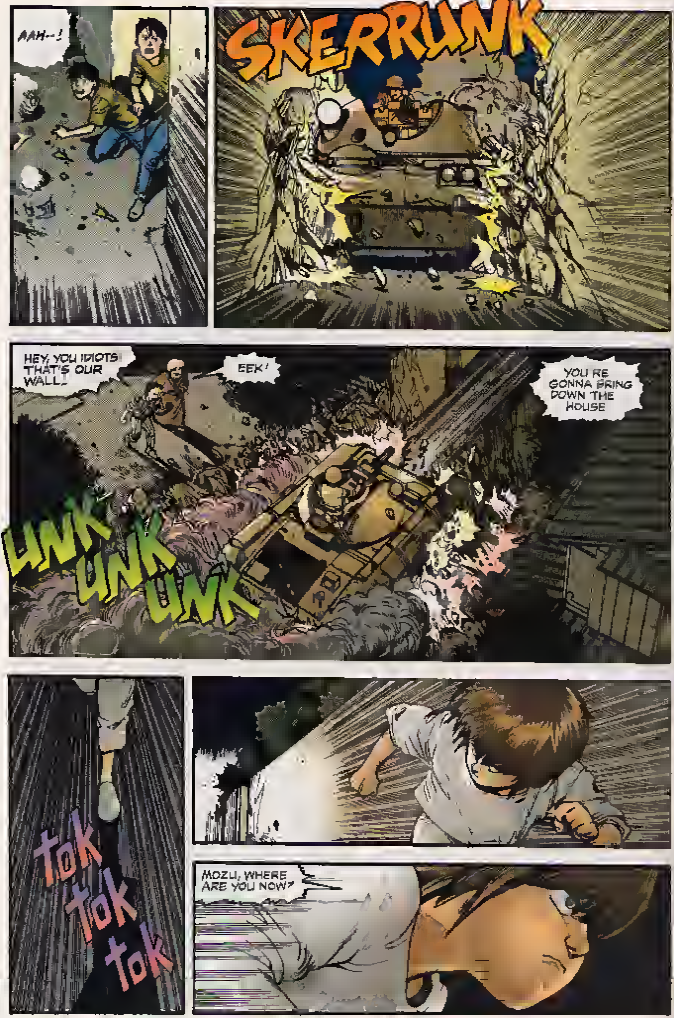
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
ASSHOLE!
TOKKA-TOK
!
GUK!

HE'S HIT! GET A MEDIC, FAST.
COME IN, HEADQUARTERS! DO YOU READ ME?
WE ARE CURRENTLY UNDER ATTACK BY AN UNIDENTIFIED ARMED FORCE. ONE MAN HAS BEEN SHOT. WE NEED A MEDICAL TEAM!
TOKKA TOK
RETREAT!
NOW...
AUGH!
BLAM BLAM BLAM
FOLLOW THEM DOWN THAT ALLEY!


AAH--!
SKERRUNK
HEY, YOU IDIOTS! THAT'S OUR WALL!
EEK!
YOU'RE GONNA BRING DOWN THE HOUSE
UNK UNK UNK
tok tok tok
MOZU, WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

AKIRA'S SAFE FOR THE MOMENT. WE'VE GOT TO LURE THEM AWAY FROM WHERE HE'S HIDDEN.
SAKAKI...
LEAVE THAT TO ME
RIGHT.
DAMN IT! THEY'RE NOT HOLDING BACK AT ALL.
UNK UNK
MR. NEZU, WE CAN'T STAY HERE! IT'S NO LONGER SAFE.
DAMN!

THE ARMED GROUP IS UNIMPORTANT. FINDING AKIRA IS OUR TOP PRIORITY!
ka-klunk
ROGER!
?
ssh
HEADQUARTERS, DO YOU COPY? WE'VE SIGHTED A CHILD DRESSED IN WHITE.
IT COULD BE AKIRA! WE'RE IN PURSUIT. OUR PRESENT LOCATION IS THE CORNER OF SECOND STREET AND SAKAE AVENUE.
COME ON! AROUND THAT CORNER!

RUNKUNK
THERE!
KRUNCH
WE ARE AT NORTH FIFTH STREET, IN PURSUIT OF A CHILD WE THINK IS AKIRA.
KLANKLAK
REPEAT, WE ARE IN PURSUIT.
HE'S HEADING FOR THE TWELFTH DISTRICT.
PUFFF
PUFFF

HEY, KAY! CHIYOKO, DID YOU HEAR THAT? AKIRA'S IN THE TWELFTH DISTRICT!
LET'S GET OVER THERE!
KANEDA, YOU MORON! FIRST YOU GET US INTO THIS MESS, AND NOW YOU WANT TO TAKE US WHERE?
EEEEK! MY HOUSE--!
KRASH
SCUSE US, COMING THROUGH.
unkunk
SO SORRY.
DARLING SPEAK TO ME

KRUMBLE
NEATO! COULD YOU DO THAT AGAIN?
TRY STAYING ON THE ROAD NEXT TIME, STUPID!
YIPE!
MO-OCO-M! THE HOUSE FELL IN!
HELP!
COCKA-DOODLE DOO!
MY GOD!
unkunkunk
SHIT! IT'S ALMOST DAWN
klank
klunk
WHAT THE ?

PUFFS
PUFFS
OHH--!
PUFFS
PUFFS
PUFFS
WE'VE TRAPPED IT.
KLUNKUN
EASY, NOW...
PUFFS
PUFFS
BE COOL, NOW. EVERYTHING'S OKAY. NO ONE'S GOING TO HURT YOU.
PUFFS PUFFS
SSH

NNG
SAKAKI!
MOZU, NO!
!
YOU CAN'T RISK IT WHEN YOU'RE THIS EXHAUSTED!
RUN!
DON'T SWEAT IT!
WHEN THE GOING GET'S TOUGH, THE TOUGH GET GOING!
?
HUH?
NOW!

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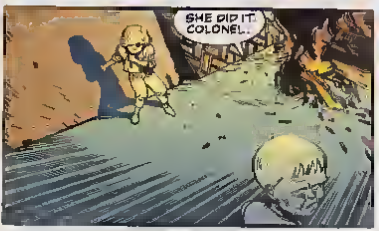
YAHAAH!
HEAD-QUARTERS, COME IN!
THUD THOK
BOOM
GASP
GASP
GASP
GASP

AAAGH!


SHE DID IT, COLONEL.

I'VE SEEN YOU USE YOUR POWER.
NOW, TELL ME WHO TRAINED YOU.

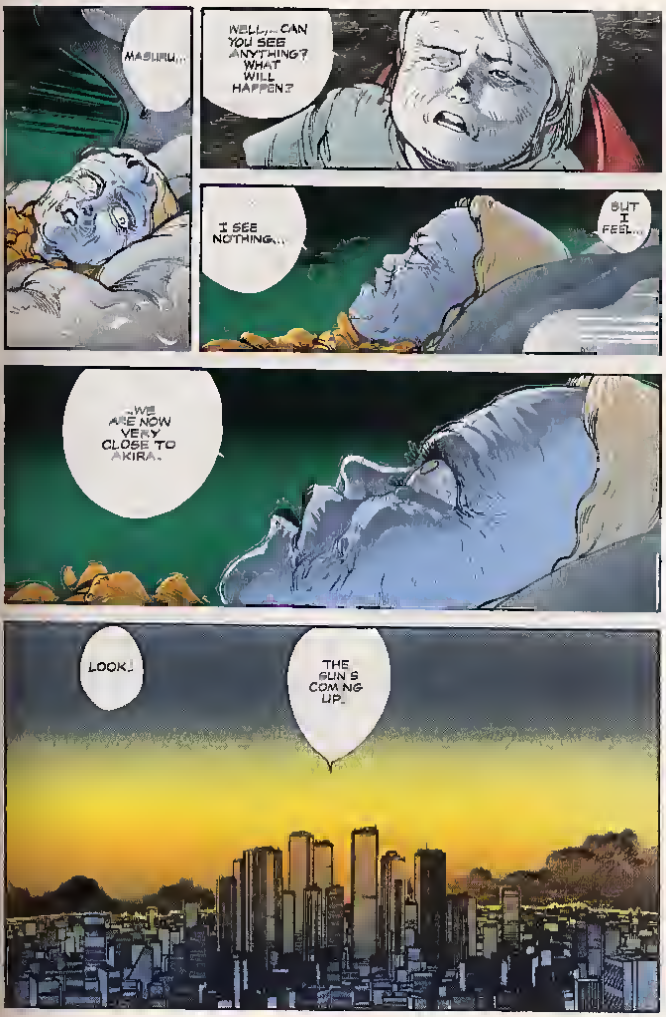
G-GO...
GO TO HELL
TEST HER POWER, TAKASHI.
WHAT?
BUT SHE... SHE JUST...
NOW, SHE CAN TAKE IT.
I'LL KILL YOU!
GONG
!

OONG
NUMBER TWENTY-SIX!
HUNH?
I HATE TO DO THIS, BUT...

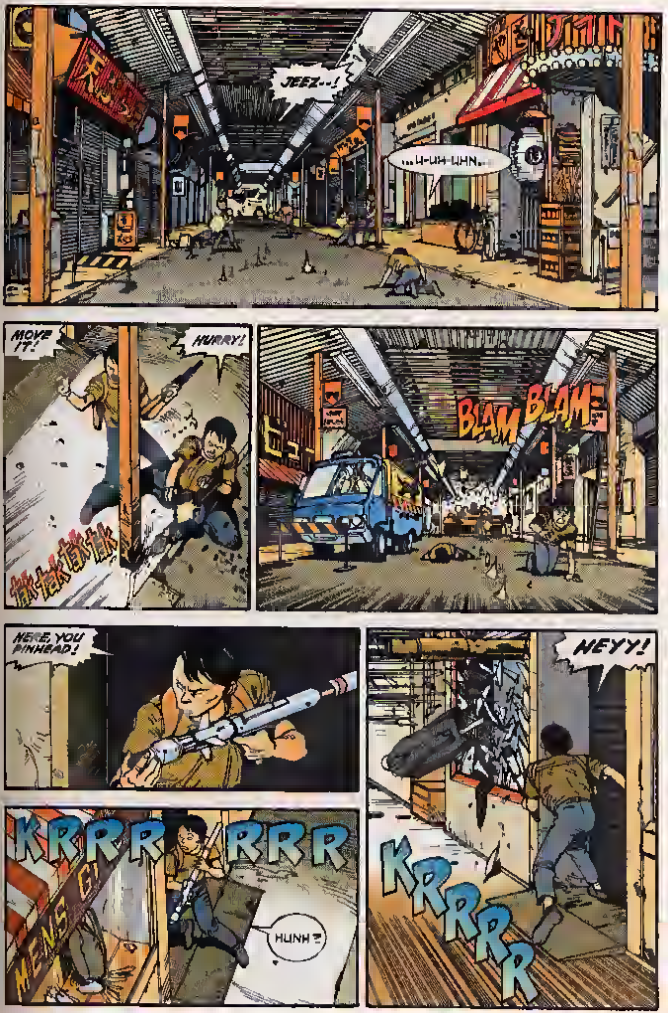
NO!
SHOOM
!
TONG

MOZU!
SA...KAKI...
R-RUN...

.....
THAT WAY.
RIGHT
OVER HERE!
KIYOKO


MASURU...
WELL... CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING? WHAT WILL HAPPEN?
I SEE NOTHING...
BUT I FEEL...
...WE ARE NOW VERY CLOSE TO AKIRA.
LOOK.
THE SUN'S COMING UP.

KLUNKUNK
KRUNCH
HEY, STOP THIS THING A MINUTE, WILL YOU?
Klink
I THINK WE'RE LOST!


JEEZ..!
...WUH-WHN...
MOVE IT!
HURRY!
TEK TEK TEK TEK TEK
BLAM BLAM
NERD, YOU PINHEAD!
NEYY!
KRRR RRR
MENS
HUHH?
KRRRR

KRASH
HOLEE SHIT!
SHRRNK
. . . . . .
OH, BEAUTIFUL! WE'VE HIT THE MALL!

WHOSE IDEA WAS THIS SHORT CUT, ANYWAY?
IT'S FULL OF MEZU'S MEN AND A LOT OF HEAVY-DUTY MILITARY HARDWARE. WHAT WILL WE DO, CHIYOKO?
WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING, KAY. ROLL RIGHT OVER THEM.
MIGHT AS WELL. I KEEP FORGETTING WE'VE GOT OUR OWN TANK.
RRUNK
DAMN YOU!!
UNK
POW
FWHOOM

YEEK!
HE GOT US!
KRUNK
WE LOST ONE OF OUR TREADS!
FLONK
THAT TAKES CARE OF THE TANK!
WHERE'D THEY GET A BAZOOKA?
GIVE HER ONE MORE GOOD SHOT, JUST TO BE SURE!
GOD-DAMN-IT-TO-HELL!

PWLOOM
THEY'RE GETTING AWAY!
HUH?
WHAT?!
DANG!
tak tak tak
LOOK OUT! WE'LL GET CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE!
RUNN!
WHOA!
QUICK! THE OTHER WAY!
KAY, HURRY!
OW! OW!
KANEDA, WHERE ARE YOU?
FASTER!
NOT THAT WAY! THIS WAY!
OPE

rattle
rattle
KABONG
WHOEVER YOU ARE--
--COME OUT OF THERE WITH YOUR HANDS UP!
WHO D' PUT A KID IN A DUMPSTER?
COME ON OUT IT'S OKAY I WON'T HURT YOU
YOU'RE A KID!
SAY WHAT?

山岩本筑
フラワーロード
WHEE-EEEE
KOFF
KOFF
...DOG...
GA-A-ACK
KOFF
KOFF
OHH, KANEDA...
YECCCK
ACK--! WH-WHERE'S CHIYOKO?
KANEDA! B BUT IF YOU'RE OVER THERE...
...THEN...
...WHOSE HAND IS THIS?!
HACK-HACK

KOFF! KOFF!
bump
JUST WHAT...
...DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, STUPID?!
BOP
SMAT
NOW WE CAN GO!
ONE... MEAN... MAMA!

BLAM BLAM
BLAM
GO NOW, WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME!
BANG
OH!
BANG
PLEASE, MR. NEZU! RETURN TO YOUR HOME! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF HERE.
YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN!

tap
tap
tap
tap
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
tap
tap
tap
tap
BLAM
BLAM
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
AND JUST WHEN EVERYTHING WAS GOING SO WELL, TOO!
EHH?!

!
R--
--RyU-!?
NEZU!
AH...
A-
"AKIRA"...?
HOW DID YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE ?
AKIRA?!

AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 15

PSYCHIC DUEL

I GOT HIM OUT OF A DUMPSTER!
ARE YOU TELLING ME HE'S AKIRA 2!
OH... I SEE, YOU MUST BE ANOTHER OF LADY MIYOKO'S INNER CIRCLE...
KLIK
...SENT TO CONFOUND AND DECEIVE ME, BUT I'M NOT LEAVING THE GAME WITHOUT A FIGHT!
GRRRR
SAY "GOOD-BYE"...
BLAM
DOWN!

BLAM
WAIT!
.....
THUD
...MI...
MR. NEZU!
OVER THERE!
UH-OH!

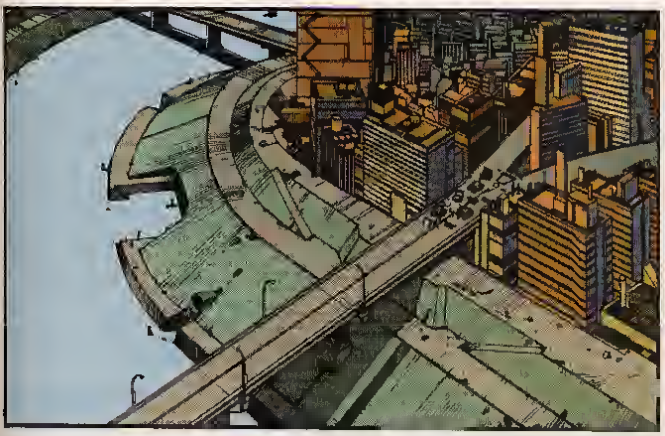
SO YOU'RE AKIRA, HUNH?
LOT OF FUSS...
...FOR SUCH A LITTLE GUY!
MOZU...
MIKI...
HURRY!

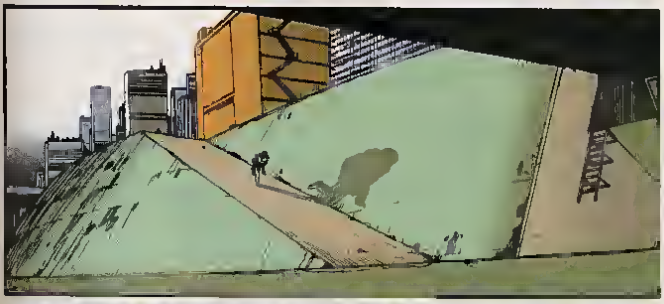
SSHM
ONE OF OUR MEN IS WOUNDED
DON'T SHOOT!
STEP AWAY FROM THE WOUNDED MAN
COME OUT SLOWLY WITH YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEADS
COME IN HEADQUARTERS WE HAVE OVERCOME THE DISSIDENT GROUP THE ELEVENTH DISTRICT IS SECURED
THERE ARE SOME WOUNDED
PLEASE SEND MEDICAL TEAMS AT ONCE

ASSUME THE POSITION! HANDS AGAINST THE WALL AND FEET APART!
NOW!
DARN!
WE WILL FIRE AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE
ARE THERE ANY MORE OF YOU?
.....
HMM!
THROUGH HERE.
DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE.
SOME OF THEM MAY BE LURKING ABOUT HERE.
TROMP TROMP

LOOK!
THE SUN'S COME UP!
WE MUST BE IN THE TWELFTH DISTRICT BY NOW, SO WATCH YOUR STEP.
WANT TO TRY AND PASS AS PAPER BOYS?
IMPOSSIBLE. WE AREN'T CARRYING PAPERS!
WELL, HOW 'BOUT IF WE SAY WE FORGOT TO BRING THEM WITH US?
BETTER YET, JUST MAKE A SIGN THAT SAYS, "SHOOT ME! I'M A SPY!" AND HANG IT AROUND YOUR NECK!
SLUSHING

Kraak
HEY...
....WHERE ARE WE?
ASHIO
THE WATERWAY!





HUNH?

WHO'S THERE?
WHERE...
ARE YOU TAKING THAT BOY?
PUFF
PUFF
PUFF
WHO?
AKIRA?
YOU NO LONGER...
WORK FOR NEZU, DO YOU?
HOW 'BOUT YOU?
I DOUBT YOU'RE JUST SOME STREET URCHIN WHO TURNED UP HERE BY CHANCE
I CAN'T WASTE TIME

Tap
WAIT--!
AARGH!
BLAM
GUNFIRE!
RIGHT NEA-BY!
DOESN'T SOUND LIKE THOSE SOL-DIERS GUNS...
SHALL WE MAKE A DETOUR?
thud

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

The year is 2030. The world is rebuilding from World War III. In **Neo-Tokyo,** plans are being made to hold the next Olympics in the "old city"—where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell. There, a band of teenaged delinquents led by **Kaneda** encounter **Number 26**—a child named **Takashi** who uses extraordinary telekinetic abilities to injure **Tetsuo,** one of Kanedas close friends.

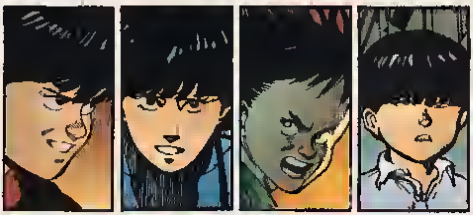
The result is **Kaneda** and **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by a man known only as the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on stopping the Colonel's activities.

Among the resistance **Kaneda** meets **Kay**—a girl he alternately maddens and tries to seduce—and Kays "brother" **Ryu.** The resistance leaders include Ryus superior, **Nezu**—who publicly leads the political party that opposes the government—and a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts, **Lady Miyako.**

The **Colonel** has a number of children under his control. Each child possesses a distinct set of psychic talents and is identified by a number marked on the hand. At one time **Lady Miyako** was Number 19 in this series. Another of the children is the mental giant **Akira,** so powerful that since the war he has been buried beneath the earths surface, suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff subjects Tetsuo to painful experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in the boy, who is redubbed Number 41. Unfortunately, as Tetsuo's powers appear, a monstrous side of his nature also surfaces. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree. He murders one of Kanedas friends and even attacks Kaneda.

Unable to tolerate the notion that **Akira** may be more power-



Kaneda **Kay** **Tetsuo** **Akira**

tap
...BOH...
LET'S GO.
AKIRA...
:GASPS
WELL, WELL, WELL!
LOOK WHAT WE HAVE HERE!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN.
MY LITTLE JUMPING JACK
YOU NEVER LEARN, DO YOU?
ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.

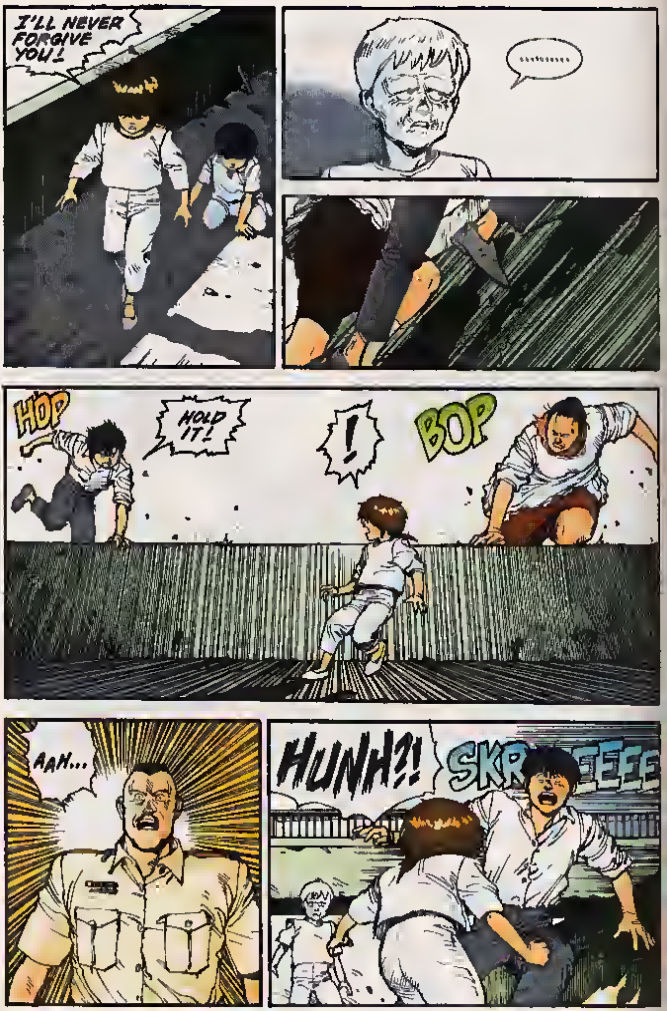
NOW!!!
I DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY...
...GAMES!
!
WHO'S PLAYING?!

POW
I'M THROUGH TAKING CRAP FROM YOU!
WHUD
...OOH...
WHATEVER STANCE YOUR OPPONENT TAKES, YOU NEUTRALIZE IT...
...BY JUMPING UP INTO THE AIR. I SAW THE PATTERN.
TIME FOR YOU TO LEARN A NEW TRICK!
!
LET'S GO, AKIRA.
RYU!

KAY!
IT IS RYU.
RYU...?
REALLY?
HOW DID YOU GET HERE?!
RYU!
HMM?
KAY!
HEY!
SHOOM
AUGH!

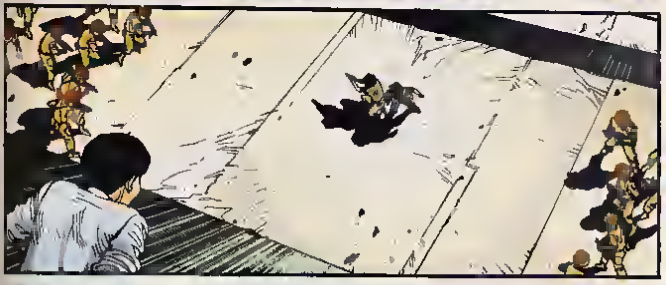
WHA--?
WHERE'D THEY GO?!
KANEDA, LOOK OVER THERE!
tok

SHKK
DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO ESCAPE, YOU CAN'T...
!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KILLED MOZU!


I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU!
.....
HOP
HOLD IT!
!
BOP
AAH...
HUNH?!
SKR

OOPS! DON'T MIND US, WE'LL JUST HEAD BACK TO WHERE WE CAME FROM! COME CHIYOKO, LET'S...

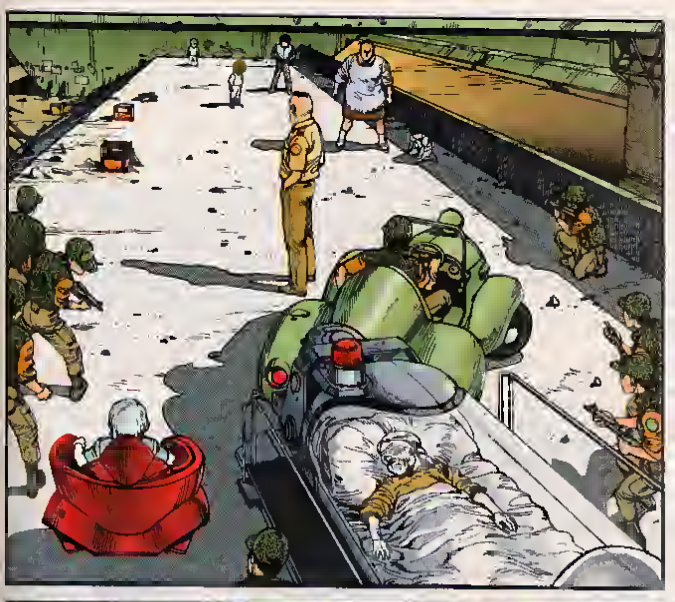
OH, NO!



I'D ASSUMED I'D FINALLY SEEN THE LAST OF YOU AT THE SECRET BASE, THAT THE COUP HAD GOTTEN YOU. YOU SEEM TO BE IN-DESTRUCTIBLE.

I HAVE TO ADMIT...
...I'M IMPRESSED.

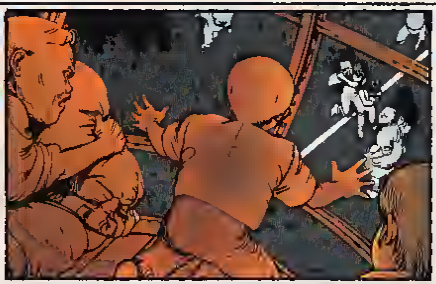
THIS, OF COURSE, IS THE END.
WANNA BET?
MY FORCES CONTROL EVERYTHING WITHIN A TWENTY-MILE RADIUS. BY NOON TODAY...
...70% OF ALL NEO-TOKYO WILL BE UNDER MY JURISDICTION.
HHMMM



CLIMB UP!

OH--!
HEH...

THE COLONEL!



ful than he is **Tetsuo** sets out to find his rival. The psychic children like **Lady Miyako,** fear Akira's power and worry about the disaster **Tetsuo** may unleash. They use their talents to help **Kaneda** and **Kay** follow **Tetsuo** to the Olympic site below which **Akira** rests. There, they are almost reunited with **Ryu,** who is working undercover as a soldier.

Hoping to prevent a disaster, the **Colonel** follows with his troops and scientists. **Tetsuo** easily repels soldiers armed with the most sophisticated weaponry. Meanwhile, the scientists monitoring Akira's cryogenic sleep realize that even in hibernation, Akira's power is responding to Tetsuo's psychic energy.

Kay and **Kaneda** watch from hiding as **Tetsuo** reaches Akira's resting place. The cryogenic chamber begins to crack from within, and **Akira** emerges.

The paranormal giant is still dazed and weak with the after-effects of his coma. **Akira** is unable to speak, shy of bright lights, and easily ordered about. **Tetsuo** and he begin to make their way to the surface, followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda.**

Terrified of what may occur, the **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira.** The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda,** but **Tetsuo** is less fortunate. The laser strikes his left arm.

The Colonel **Kiyoko** **Takashi** **Ryu**

...HEH...
THE GANG'S ALL HERE.
DON'T YOU THINK IT FITTING THAT THE ENTIRE CAST BE ASSEMBLED FOR THE FINALE?
AREN'T YOU FORGETTING THE CURTAIN CALL?
!
HERE..!
TAK
!

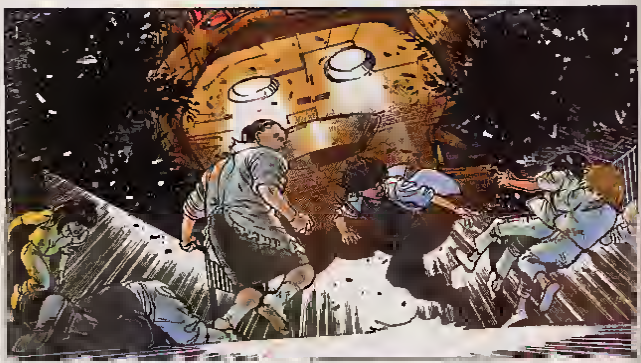
NEXT ISSUE. **AKIRA UNLEASHED**

THE MAKING OF AKIRA THE EPIC COMIC PART III—COLORING

When **Akira** is printed in Japan, it is printed in black and white. The American version, however, is meticulously colored by Steve Oliff and his Olyoptics staff. This month we will examine the coloring of **Akira**, step by step.

As detailed in **Part I** of **The Making of Akira**, Kodansha first makes "mirror" proofs of Katsuhiro Otomo's original artwork. A large set of proofs (10" x 15") is sent to Epic Comics for scripting and paste-up. An identical but smaller set of proofs (7" x 10¾") is sent to Steve Oliff for coloring.

Using felt pens, airbrushing, and gouache, Oliff colors in these proofs. These "color guides" are then sent to Otomo and Kodansha for approval and any necessary corrections.



Color guides like this one are used by Olyoptics to assign computer colors to regions of black and white artwork.

A panel of Oliff's coloring without Otomo's black line artwork

In the meantime, Epic Comics sends the larger proofs, complete with pasted-up lettering, to Olyoptics. The proofs are entered into the Olyoptics computer system, utilizing proprietary software developed by Pixelcraft, by way of a scanner

Following the "color guides," Oliff and his staff of five then enter colors for each proof into the computer program. "This," says Oliff, "is where we fill in the subtle shadings."

After coloring on the computer system, Oliff saves all the information onto floppy disks. He sends the disks, along with the line art and color file to Network Color, the company that is responsible for outputting the film. The info is loaded into Network Color's linotype machine, and the resulting output is chromalins.

A chromalin, or chrom, is a mechanical generation of each color plate registered to itself. It represents how each color is printed separately and then combined together to form a visual representation of the final product. In short, an early version of the final **Akira** is produced, and sent to Epic Comics.

The Epic staff examines each chrom carefully, checking for errors in coloring and printing. After indicating the errors on the chroms, Epic returns the chroms to Network Color and corrections are made on the film.

Following the corrections, the final film goes to the printer. "Blues" are made from the film. "Blues" are an actual representation of how the final comic will appear—minus the color. The pages are instead printed in shades of blue. At this point, Epic checks for final corrections, and makes sure that all the pages are present and in order, and the blues are returned to the printer for printing.

Steve Oliff colors using the same computer system as the one used for most Marvel Comics. The difference is that Oliff colors the final film himself, while other Marvel Comics send color guides to the separator, who then assigns the colors using the computer. Oliff, in other words, acts as both the colorist and the separator. **Akira** is the first regular comic book in the world to be colored using such a system.

A "chrom", with errors indicated by Epic staffmembers, is sent to the engraver for corrections on the final film.

NEXT MONTH: Working on Akira at Epic

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production
MARIE JAVINS
assistant editor
MARGARET CLARK
editor
CARL POTTS
executive editor

If you listen you can hear it. Stop. Stand still. Listen. It is the sound of the city of Neo-Tokyo. It is not a living being but somehow it knows. It hears the gunfire, the cries of the wounded, the tattoo of running, scurrying feet. It knows that something is going to happen. So the city holds its breath and waits. It remembers Akira. It knows.

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

Neo-Tokyo is placed in a state of military emergency following the disaster. "Caretaker robots" patrol the streets dealing harshly with looters and restoring order. The **Colonel** successfully conceals the truth about what has occurred despite leaks to the media, but he is discredited and made a scapegoat following the disaster. He decides to use the emergency as an excuse to hunt down and destroy the resistance once and for all.

Lady Miyako correctly divines that **Nezu** is no longer to be trusted. She calls upon **Sakaki**, a young girl trained in techniques of infiltration, observation, and combat, and asks her to find **Akira.**

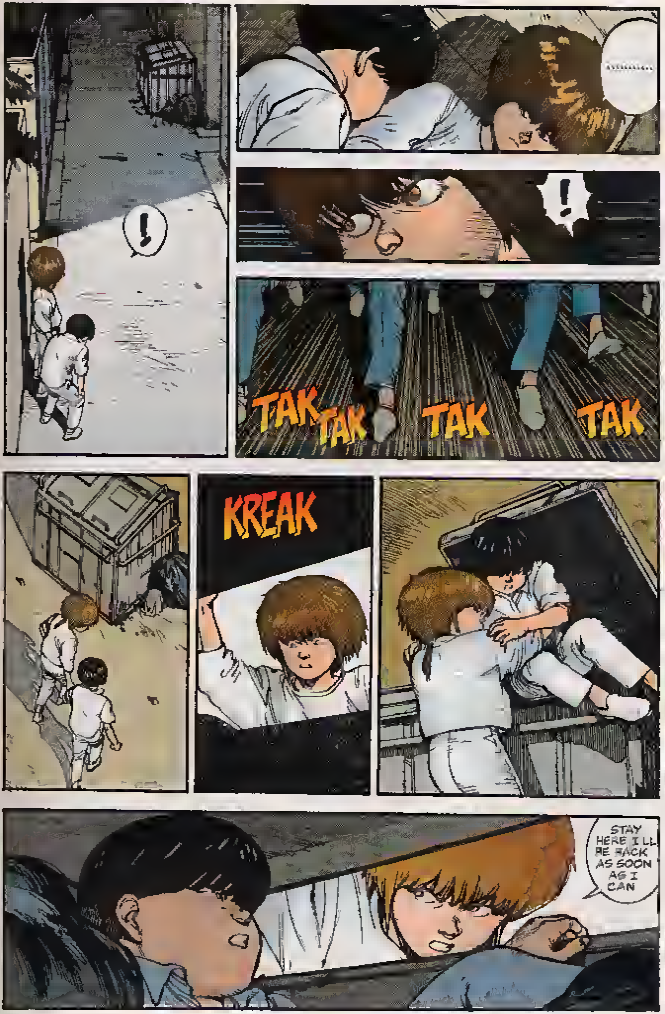
Kay and **Kaneda** take shelter with **Chiyoko**, a formidable woman in the resistance. **Ryu**, unaware of what has occurred, reports to **Nezu,** who scornfully denies all knowledge of **Kay**—with whom he has been in contact. **Nezu** says nothing of **Akira**, planning to exploit the still-somnolent child for his own purposes. **Kay** brings **Akira** to **Nezu,** who orders his staff to kill **Kay, Kaneda,** and **Chiyoko.** The three manage to escape and head for Nezus home, where **Akira** is hidden.

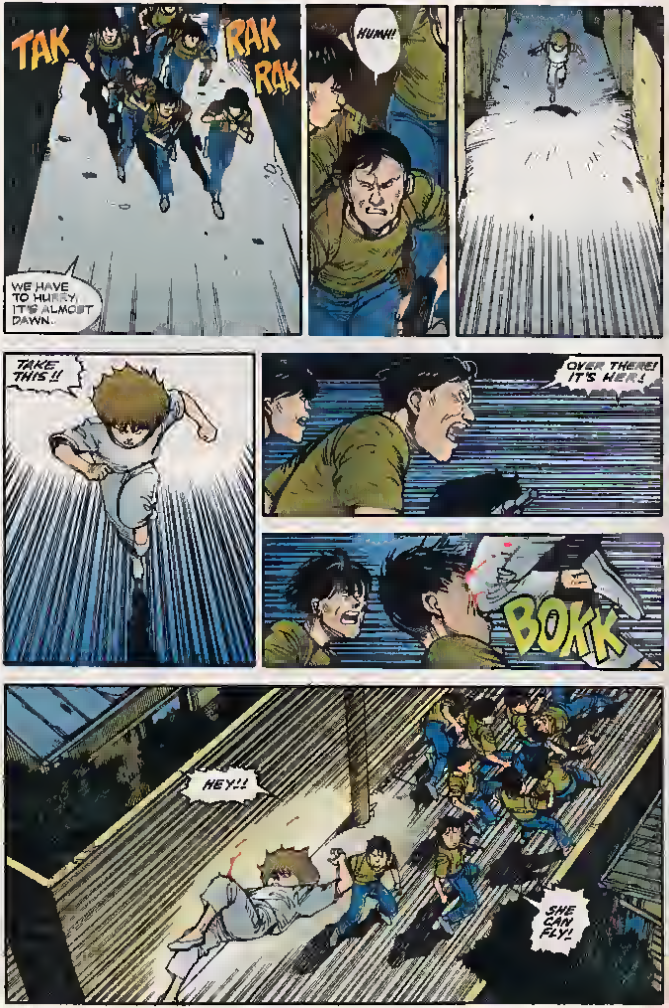
Nezu is caught breaking curfew by soldiers who open fire on his car. Secretly followed by **Ryu, Nezu** and his chauffeur evade the army and survive the attack of a caretaker robot. By the time **Nezu** arrives home, the government has been overthrown by the Colonel's inner circle, and a provisional military regime is in place.

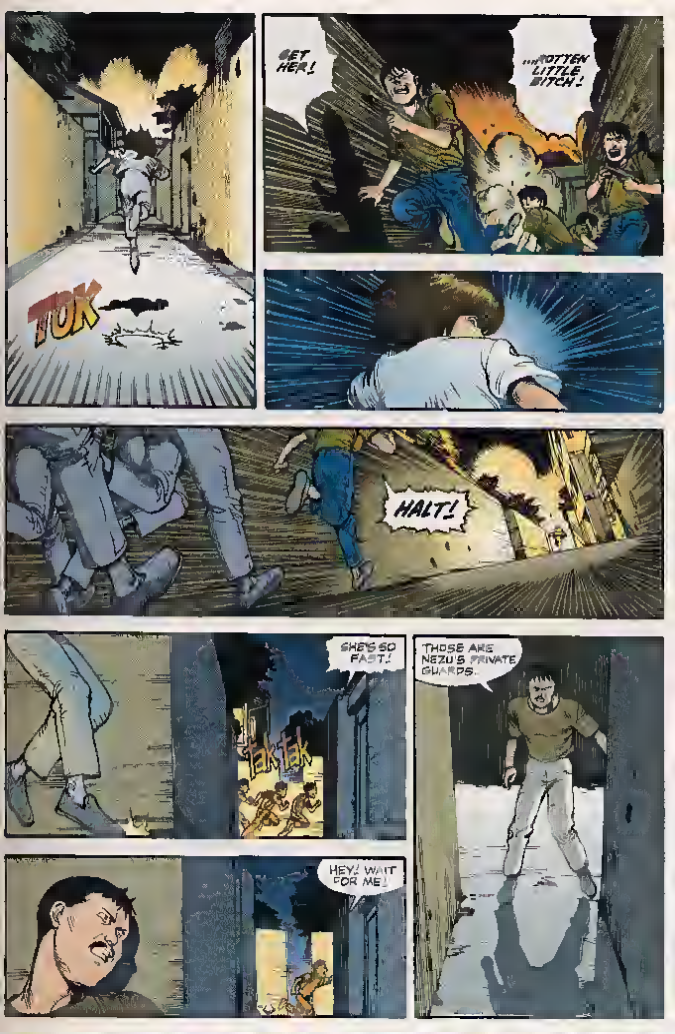
Kay, Kaneda, and **Chiyoko** manage to free **Akira,** only to have him stolen from them again. This time it is **Sakaki,** who almost succeeded in an earlier similar attempt. Now she is aided by two other girls, **Miki** and **Mozu.** The **Colonel,** who is frantically trying to find **Akira** before he fully awakens, arrives on the scene with his three psychic wards. The three warn their master that **Sakaki** and her allies are also psychically gifted, although not as strongly as themselves.

Mayhem erupts, and **Kay, Kaneda,** and **Chiyoko** commandeer a tank and enter the thick of it. **Nezu** corners **Sakaki** and **Akira,** but before he can harm them, **Miki** sacrifices her life to enable the pair to escape. Enraged, **Nezu** orders his soldiers to bring **Sakaki** and **Akira** back, dead or alive.

Chiyoko Nezu Lady Miyako Sakaki


!
.....
!
TAK TAK TAK TAK
KREAK
STAY HERE I'LL BE BACK AS SOON AS I CAN


TAK
RAK
RAK
WE HAVE TO HURRY! IT'S ALMOST DAWN.
HUNH!
TAKE THIS !!
OVER THERE! IT'S HER!
BOKK
HEY!!
SHE CAN FLY!


TUK
GET HER!
...ROTTEN LITTLE BITCH!
HALT!
SHE'S SO FAST!
TEK TEK
THOSE ARE NEZU'S PRIVATE GUARDS.
HEY! WAIT FOR ME!